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***Carson, Cole Announce \$700k For Arbuckle-Simpson Aquifer
Funding Provided Through Energy And Water Appropriations Bill***

Washington, D.C. --

Oklahoma Congressmen Brad Carson and Tom Cole announced today that an additional \$700,000 has been appropriated for a study into the hydrology and water resources management of the Arbuckle-Simpson Aquifer located in Southern Oklahoma. The funding is provided in the Energy and Water Appropriations Bill of 2004.

The Arbuckle-Simpson Aquifer has been designated a sole source aquifer by EPA and a large number of Oklahomans depend on its production for their health and economic future. The Aquifer underlies approximately 500 square miles of south central Oklahoma and is an important source of water supply for the region's citizens.

The two Oklahoma Congressmen recently wrote a letter in support of the funding to the chair and ranking member of the committee. In the letter Congressman Carson and Congressman Cole stated, "continuing funding for this study is critical to the residents of this area." They went on to say, "During recent years, a number of issues have emerged which have caused concerns about the utilization and continued health of the aquifer. In order to assure the future well being of the aquifer, a five-year study has begun to include detailed assessments of the formation's hydrology, water quality and vulnerability, ground water/surface water interactions, land use changes, state and tribal water rights and overall management of the resource."

Estimates are that the study will take 5 years at a cost of approximately \$3 million total, due to the complex nature of the aquifer and tribal/federal interests. Currently the study is beginning to define the scope of work and total costs.

"I am very pleased that we were able to secure \$700,000 federal dollars for a project that is vital to the preservation of this aquifer," said Congressman Carson. "Water is a God-given natural resource to this area and we must make sure that we responsibly continue to preserve and maintain this for future generations."

"The Arbuckle-Simpson Aquifer is essential to the quality of life of the residents of Southern Oklahoma. It is important that first and foremost they have the water they need. By obtaining the funds for research, important decisions can be made to secure the future of the Aquifer and ease the minds of the effected families and communities, Congressman Cole said.

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